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BIBLE AND WINE,

Respectfully addressed to all believers in the Bible
who make, sell or drink as a beverage
intoxicating liquors.

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“The Lord hath more truth yet, to break forth out of his
Holy Word.”

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THE BIBLE AND WINE.

What is the Bible doctrine respecting *wine*? Does it commend, or prohibit its use? May we by its authority, drink intoxicating liquors, or are we commanded to abstain? These are questions of no slight importance. They are intimately connected with the peace of society, the progress of Christianity, and the well being of the world. They demand therefore, of every Bible reader, an earnest and careful investigation.

It is our opinion, and it will be our object in this brief address, to show, that the Bible when properly interpreted is a *Total Abstinence Book*. It gives no permission, or authority whatever for the use of alcoholic liquors, as a beverage. No doubt some will be astonished that such a statement should be made, for either their attention has not been directed to this subject, or they have read the Bible in a very different light.

"To the Law then and to the Testimonies." These alone can decide the question; and if any man speak not according to these. "It is because there is no light in him."

I—The first fact to be observed is *that the Bible unquestionably speaks very differently of wine.*

Sometimes it commends it ; sometimes it condemns it. Sometimes it represents it as a blessing ; at others as a curse. Sometimes it is a thing to be desired and sought after ; at others it is a thing to be shunned and hated. Sometimes it maketh glad the heart of man ; and then it maketh woe, wounds, and sorrow. Sometimes it is a symbol of mercy ; and then a symbol of wrath. In fine the Bible speaks as differently of wine, as it is, possible for it to speak of any two substances however different.

2.—This fact admitted, and it cannot be intelligently denied, the question arises, is it the *Same Kind of wine the Bible speaks so differently of* ? I believe it is not. The Bible is consistent with itself. It speaks differently, because it speaks of *different kinds* of wine. The wine by which Noah was dishonored, by which Lot was defiled, by which Prophets erred, and Priests stumbled and fell, was not the wine mingled, by wisdom symbolic of the Gospel, offered in sacrifice, and dispensed at the table of the Lord.

(a) I argue this fact first, on the ground of analogy, I find the Bible speaking of other things, in exactly the same way. Thus in one place it is said, "And God did tempt Abraham" and in another, "God is not tempted with evil, neither tempteth he *any man*. Here, though the term used in both passages, is the same, the meaning is very different. In the

first it means a trial of principle for the purpose of strengthening the good. In the second a trial of heart for the purpose of seducing to evil. Again, It is asked "shall there be evil in the city and the Lord hath not done it" And it is declared, "*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil.*" In the first of these passages the term evil is equivalent to judgement, and the meaning is, shall there be judgement from God upon sinners in the city, and the Lord hath not sent it. In the second, it is equivalent to transgression of the law of God, or sin, and in this sense God cannot behold it. So, when I read that *wine* is a *Mocker*, and a *Deceiver*; and that it maketh glad the heart of man—I believe that though the term used is the same, the substance designated is very different—In the one case it is a vile subtile poisonous compound, which does indeed mock, and deceive men, to their very face. In the other it is a simple, nutritious beverage, which does indeed make glad the heart of man, by refreshing all his powers.

(b) I argue the existence of different kinds of wine, as spoken of in the Bible. *Secondly*, from the fact that different words are used in the original Scriptures. In the Hebrew of the old Testament, there are no less than nine distinct terms, and in the Greek of the new two, *all* unfortunately in our version rendered by the word *wine*. Now it is impos-

sible in any language to find nine distinct words, all having the same meaning. It might be possible in some languages, to find *one* word having nine different meanings; but nine words having *one*, never. Besides, it is *utterly unreasonable* to suppose that the Holy Ghost, who inspired the Bible, and who had a perfect knowledge of language would use nine words when one would do as well. That Divine Spirit used different terms because it wished to designate different substances.

(c) But the Bible itself plainly speaks of different kinds of wine, and thereby *authoritatively* settles this question. It speaks of sweet wine, and of sour wine—of wine on the lees, well refined; and of the wine of God's *wrath*, of wine mixed, and of wine mingled, of wine good and of wine bad, and in the 5th chapter of the Book of Nehemiah and the 18th verse it is said "All sorts of wine" were laid up in the King's cellar for the use of his numerous household while he was governor of Judaea.

Thus it is established beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt that the Bible speaks of different kinds of wine.

3. My next point is, that the Bible speaks well of unintoxicating wine, and that *only*; and that it speaks ill of intoxicating wine, and that uniformly, and consistently.

And here I would have it remembered, that the Bible very seldom commends any sort of wine. The word occurs more than two hundred and sixty times in the Scriptures, and yet apart from TIROSH, which is found Thirty-eight times, and can easily be shown to be a *solid* not a liquid*, there are not more than twenty-five commendations of wine in the whole Bible. This is a significant fact, especially when it is remembered, that there are more than a hundred and thirty warnings against the use of wine.

But here is the point of the argument in not one of the commendatory passages; can it be proved that the wine referred to is intoxicating: in almost every one of the warning texts it can easily be shown to be such.

Take a few illustrations. In Isaiah 5th chapter and 11th verse it is said. Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink: that continue until night, till wine inflame them. Here we have the effects of the poison in the creation of an appetite which will not let the drunkard sleep, which rouses him at early morn in search of strong drink. The burning fever

* Tirosh, is spoken of as growing in the fields, as being piled up in heap, as being gathered into barns, as being eaten as food, and it is never spoken of in connection with pots, or cups, or bottles or drinking utensils of any sort. It simply means, Vine fruit, or grapes; not a liquid: much less wine.

of the alcohol drives away "Balmy nature's sweet restorer," and whets the appetite for strong drink. I have known a man whose wife and four children had to beg their breakfast, rise at the early dawn of day, travel four miles to a tavern and spend the last cent in rum before the sun was up. So fierce the appetite, so terrible the woe of the drunkard.

Again, in the twenty-third chapter and thirty-first verse of the book of Proverbs it is said, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup; when it moveth itself aright, at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." We have here a perfect description of the fermenting process; and of the powerful and deadly effects of alcohol. Baron Von Leibeg in his chemical lectures gives a striking testimony to the descriptive accuracy of this text. He says, "The fermentation of grape juice begins with a chemical action, oxygen is absorbed from the air: and then the juice becomes coloured, and turbid by the falling of the albumen, and the rising of the gas." Thus science unites with revelation in declaring that the wine that biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder, is *intoxicating* and therefore not fit for use. I need not multiply illustration, in every passage where wine is commended as a beverage, it can be shown to be good, that is unfermented,

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unintoxicating; in every passage where it is held up as a warning or admonition, it can be shown to be bad, that is fermented and intoxicating. Let any one who doubts this but carefully examine the Bible for himself and he will find abundance of evidence.

4. But it is asked, with an air of apparent triumph "Did not Christ make wine?" Certainly he did. No believer in the Bible ever denied that; but what kind of wine did Christ make? alcoholic? no, *never*! The Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world never made a substance causing so much sin. He sent the spirit of peace among men: not the spirit of *wine*.

Let us briefly examine this much abused miracle.

(a) Notice in the first place the circumstances attending it. It was a marriage feast, which among the Jews commonly lasted seven days. Now upon the supposition that this was intoxicating wine that was made, see what it leads to; here are a company of *professedly religious* men and women with Christ at their head, who have been drinking alcoholic wine for some days, their supply is now exhausted and they are "*well drunk*." This fact is made known to Christ and he immediately creates about 120 gallons more intoxicating wine for their use, thereby virtually saying to them "drink on my friends, no harm at all in being *drunk with wine*. Surely if any host, or any

guest, in respectable society would do this in our day, their names would be cast out as evil. Is *it possible* then to conceive that Jesus did? Is this like him who said "watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," who said "if any man will come after me let him *deny himself*," and who was the holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners? who will be bold enough to affirm this? who will dare to say that he who came among other things to set a perfect example before men, made all this alcoholic wine, for men in such a state. Perish the thought forever as a foul libel upon the spotless character of Jesus.

(b) Notice secondly, the object of this miracle. It was the manifestation of the Divine Glory, we read, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory." Now which would manifest the glory of Christ the most, and the best. The creation of a maddening, enervating, subtle poison, which in the ages to come would ruin millions of men. Or the creation of a luscious, wholesome, nutritious beverage which would add both to the health, and happiness of man. The question is easily answered. How did God the Father make wine? He made it, but not alcoholic. To prevent its formation, God exerted infinite skill in the formation of the grape. He put the saccharine matter in one sack, or cell, and the glutinous mat-

ter in another sack or cell, and covered the whole with a nice skin bottle, and then hung the grape upon the pendant vine to ripen so that there might be no commingling of the elements causing fermentation. He manifested his glory by making wine without alcohol. Is it not reasonable to suppose that Christ did the same? Neither in the history of the miracle; nor the whole compass of the Bible is there a single evidence, that this wine was intoxicating, why then do men excuse their drunkenness by the conduct of the Son of God.

(c) But it is said again, "Did not Paul tell *Timothy* to use wine? Certainly he did; but observe well, what is plainly taught in this Apostolic prescription. First, that Timothy had been a total abstainer, otherwise there would not have been the slightest need of the advice, "Take no longer water." Secondly, it was but the *medicinal use* of a little wine," For thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." Thirdly, there is not a syllable to intimate that the wine was alcoholic. Now look at the logic of the drinking *man* in the interpretation of this passage. Paul says he prescribed the use of a *little unalcoholic wine medicinally* for the Teetotaler Timothy, therefore I may drink, as a beverage, Brandy, Gin, Rum, Whiskey, *Forty rod*, *Rotgut*, and all kinds of alcoholic liquors. Did ever any sane man, reason in such a way before? Did ever any whose

brains were not muddled with the fumes of alcohol so confound the simple truth ?

(d) But it will be asked, why did Jesus make and Paul *commend* the use of wine, that was not in common use and never could be. I believe it is still commonly supposed that wine cannot be preserved, for any length of time ; or transported from one clime to another without fermentation. No greater mistake was ever made, no greater error was ever so widely circulated.

The truth is that the ancients had their wine fresh from the grape for about four months of the year : and they had no less than three, *successful* methods of preserving it. They put the new wine into new bottles, as intimated in the New Testament, and then buried the bottles, in the cool earth, or immersed them in water. Or they passed through the wine, in the cask, the fumes of sulphur, and thus destroyed the principal of fermentation : Or they *boiled* the grape juice down to a thick consistency, and thus preserved it, not only for months, but if necessary for years. The Hon. Mr. Delavan of Albany, New York, while traveling in Europe some years ago, procured some wine preserved by boiling. He brought it to his house kept it in his cellar for years and sti'l found it of excellent quality. Thus there was not the slightest incongruity in the Master making and the Apostle prescribing

the use of *unalcoholic* wine, for such was in general use in those days; and is *still* in all wine producing countries.

5: I refer but to another argument, in proof of my position; *it is that the Bible in condemning the use of alcoholic wine, as a beverage, acts in perfect harmony, with the well known facts of science, and of history.* These have long since united, in declaring the evil effects of alcohol on the healthy human system, and on the morals of the world. Science has plainly proved it to be an insidious, subtle, stealthy, powerful poison, which destroys the healthy action of the stomach, dilutes the blood, inflames the nerves, and by unnatural excitement exhausts the whole system. And History has lifted its warning voice saying to all "Beware of strong drink." It tells of heroes, prophets, priests, and kings fallen by its power? and it shows that neither genius, learning, wealth or power are proof against it. Thus we have God in nature, and in Revelation, speaking the same language, uttering the same voice, declaring the same truth, that "Wine is a *Mocker*, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Well might Solomon say, "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the *wine*; they that go to seek mixed wine." Let

God be true then, and every *man* a liar, and he says, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth ; or is offended ; or is made weak." Let no one say it is only the *abuse* the Bible condemns. It is not the *abuse only but the thing itself*. It is not the abuse of polygamy murder, or theft, the Bible condemns, but these things themselves, so it is not the abuse of wine but wine itself. The prohibition is plain, "Be not among wine bibbers," "Look not thou upon the wine." "It is not the manner of God in his word to condemn an evil in its *end*, and be silent respecting its beginning." Man deals with evil consequences, and overlooks guilty causes ; but God removes the cause of the evil. He makes the fountain clean that the streams may be pure.

If then the Bible be a total abstinence book ; if God has uttered his voice in prohibition, ought not men to hear, ought not the CHURCH to hearken ; ought not especially Ministers, Deacons and Elders to put away the forbidden thing. On their action mainly depends the success or failure of the cause of temperance. Let the Church, but be aroused, and come up to the plain Bible standard ; and the grim, dark, deathly monster, now desolating this fair earth, will soon be driven back to his own place ; but while the church folds, and caresses him, he will continue to desolate, tear and slay. O could we

see in one vast crowd, the victims of this traffic during a single year ! could we follow each to the bar of God, and hear the sentence of their eternal doom, " No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God," it would surely satisfy us that God, the Holy God of Heaven had *never licensed such a traffic*.

Ye men of God suffer the word of exhortation, and rouse ye from your fatal indifference. Souls are perishing, Alcohol is driving them to Hell, in countless numbers ! O lead them not by your example, nor say am I my brother's keeper. By the miseries of the living, by the agonies of the dying, by the untold suffering of the lost, by the love of Jesus, by the truth of God and by the hope of heaven, I *intreat all to abstain* from alcohol.

Wine, like man its maker, flows
Mirth, mixed up with many woes ;
But water made by Him above,
For ever flows a stream of love.